



We Wear the PHS Uniform with “Pride and Distinction”



“People wear their uniform every day as visible and reassuring evidence to our fellow citizens that they are on the job keeping us safe. They are the officers and enlisted people of proud and honorable services. Our country and the world need to know that.”

- Gerald Farrell, CAPT USN (ret)

Uniform wear is considered essential. As of July 1, 2008, daily uniform wear is required by all US-based PHS officers. Uniform wear is important to officership, to visibility of the Service, and for your career. Correct uniform wear shows respect for your country, your Service, for all who have served in uniform, and for yourself. This section of the Scientist Handbook is intended to inform and provide helpful information to officers on uniform wear and personal appearance.

Where is the official PHS page on uniforms?

<http://www.usphs.gov/AboutUs/uniforms.aspx>

What are the PHS uniform regulations?

<http://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/ccis/CCISToc.aspx?ShowTOC=Y>

Click on Book 4 (Uniforms) under the Table of Contents.

Instructions for uniforms for female officers (April 29, 2014):

http://dcp.psc.gov/eccis/documents/CC421_02.pdf

Instructions for uniforms for male officers (April 29, 2014):

http://dcp.psc.gov/eccis/documents/CC421_01.pdf

Where can I buy uniforms and components?

New Uniforms:

Navy Exchange Uniforms Store (for all uniforms, **except certain ODU components**- see below):

<https://www.navy-nex.com/nex/uniforms>

Marlow White:

<http://www.marlowwhite.com/public-health-service-uniforms.html>

US Coast Guard Uniform Distribution Center (**for ODU components only**):

<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/udc/>. Items may also be purchased on location.

Note that some accoutrements for the NOAA/PHS ODU are NOT procured from the USCG site; they may be ordered from Navy NEX (<https://www.navy-nex.com/nex/uniforms>) or the uniform shop at the Walter Reed National Medical Center in Bethesda, MD [phone: 301-295-1489, fax: 301-295-1268].

The Division of Commissioned Corps Personnel and Readiness has created an ODU Ordering Cheat Sheet:

[http://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/PDF_docs/Directions%20%20Guidance%20for%20Ordering%20ODU%20online_31Aug12%20\(3\).pdf](http://dcp.psc.gov/ccmis/PDF_docs/Directions%20%20Guidance%20for%20Ordering%20ODU%20online_31Aug12%20(3).pdf)

Reconditioned Uniforms:

Lighthouse Uniform Company:

<http://catalog.lighthouseuniform.com/phs/>

Used Uniforms: Some Commissioned Officers Association (COA) branches may have used uniform and insignia “shops.” One example is the Atlanta COA.

Atlanta COA Uniform Store:

<http://www.atlantacoa.com/alternate-store-page>

*The above websites are provided for informational purposes only;
and do not imply endorsement by the USPHS or the Scientist Category.*

How do I pay for alterations?

Some alterations, such as hemming, are included in the price of pants and skirts (and some other uniform components) ordered through the online Navy Exchange uniform store. If you order them online, and get the alterations done at a Navy uniform store, they will complete the alterations free of charge (but you must show them your receipt). Please make sure to check with your nearest Navy Exchange uniform store to confirm what alterations are covered with your online purchase. Officers purchasing items through other avenues are responsible for all alteration costs.

Where can I get PHS nametags, pre-made ribbon bars etc.?

Ultrathin Company (ribbons assembled on ribbon bars, name tags, and medals):
<http://www.ultrathin.com/>

Nametags can also be ordered from the uniform shop at the Walter Reed National Medical Center in Bethesda, MD [phone: 301-295-1489, fax: 301-295-1268].

Who are Uniform Authorities?

The National Uniform Authority (NUA) is the Surgeon General. The NUA may designate a Local Uniform Authority (LUA) as appropriate.

Challenges with uniform wear:

Shoulder boards: Avoid “dragging anchor.” Here is the correct orientation for left shoulder boards. If you wear them so the anchor is pointing towards your back, you are “dragging anchor.”



Looking sharp: Many officers have sedentary but stressful assignments. As we age, maintaining a “trim” appearance becomes more of a challenge. We should strive to reach/maintain a healthy weight as shown on the chart in the 2001 Surgeon General’s Healthy Weight Advice for Consumers:

http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact_advice.htm

Care and Cleaning of the Uniform

Q. How do you spit polish leather shoes?

A. Try the technique described on this website:

<http://usmilitary.about.com/cs/generalinfo/ht/spitshine.htm>

Q. Is there one place that has general information on taking care of my uniform?

A. This is a page from the U.S. Navy’s Historical Center Library. It includes a summary of the U.S. Navy uniform regulations, and an extra section (midway down the page) called “How to Keep your Uniform Shipshape.” It describes general uniform wear/ maintenance, and gives a brief rundown on how to remove various different types of stains.

<http://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/heritage/uniforms-and-personal-equipment/maintenance-care-of-uniforms.html>

**Q. Is there another way to clean my khaki garrison cap besides dry cleaning?
That’s expensive and doesn’t seem to work.**

A. Some officers have had success with Woolite or pre-soaking using Shout or similar stain removers.

Q. Is there a way to remove “pilling” or rough uniform appearance on the khaki uniform?

A. A shaving razor can be used to remove these from the uniform.